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History of the Library of Congress. By WILLIAM DAWSON JOHNSTON. Volume I, 1800-1864. (Washington: Government Printing Office. 1904. Pp. 535.)

THE half-title of Mr. Johnston's *History* indicates that it is intended as a "contribution" to American library history rather than as a narrative history, and the letter of transmittal shows that other such contributions have been undertaken by librarians in various states for other libraries. The work is to be judged, therefore, as setting the pace for a series, as well as in itself, and as committed to that method which the scientific world has come to associate with the word contribution. It is, in fact, scientific, scholarly, abounding in documents, quotations, relevant details, and statistics, and this first volume is exhaustive to the point of more than 500 pages, exclusive of 25 facsimiles and other plates for the period ending 1864.

It may be added that the treatment of Mr. Johnston is painstaking and well judged. About 60 per cent. of the letterpress being fine-print quotation of documents and the like, while a large fraction of the remainder consists of other quotation of one sort and another, the strictly narrative portion of the work is relatively small and somewhat discontinuous; moreover the contribution does not lend itself well to those graces of style appropriate to the popular history as a form of polite literature, but Mr. Johnston's diction is on the whole adequate, albeit the style of this narrative portion might probably have borne a trifle more moistening without suffering the reproach of too much exuberance.

The work is of chief importance for technical library history, but it is, in very unusual degree for such a work, valuable for its side-lights on American political history and biography. Its contribution to the history of manners is, in spite of some good touches, perhaps not so great as might have been expected or as would be likely to be the case in the history of some Boston, New York, or Philadelphia library; but by the nature of its subject-matter it is close to politics, and the painstaking and elaborate way in which the whole history of legislation regarding it is brought out makes it a suggestive chapter in the history of Congress. The chapters on Librarian Watterston and his removal are a most suggestive contribution to the history of partisan politics and of the spoils system. The relations of Gerry, Clay, Everett, Choate, and various other members of Congress with the Library, and notably the matters connected with Jefferson and the purchase of his library, are also matters of more than technical interest.

In its primary aspect as a contribution to technical library history the work is of peculiar value in the attention that it gives to the history of administration, classification, cataloguing, and the like. In this it shows a remarkably well conceived plan and certainly a result of uncommon suggestiveness. It is distinctly a history of origins, ending as it does in 1864 with the appointment of Mr. Spofford, at which time the

Library was less than one-tenth of its present size, but it is excellent history in its foreshadowings. In its account of the growing demand for a library which should be national indeed, of the far-sighted, but for a long time unaccomplished, cataloguing plans of Jewett and of the still more far-sighted and ever valid principles of Jefferson as to the composition and the classification of a library, we see the real historical roots of the present Library of Congress and even have grounds on which to forecast its future development. The sections relating to Jefferson and to Jewett are, either of them, sufficient in themselves to give real distinction to the work in its technical aspect.

E. C. RICHARDSON.

Select Despatches from the British Foreign Office Archives relating to the Formation of the Third Coalition against France, 1804-1805. Edited by JOHN HOLLAND ROSE, Litt.D. (London: Offices of the Royal Historical Society. 1904. Pp. xii, 289.)

THIS publication, forming volume VII of the third series, consists of the more important British despatches dealing with the negotiations leading up to the Anglo-Austro-Russian alliance by the treaty of April 11, 1805, and of the despatches from Berlin in October-December, 1805, bearing upon the attempt to draw Prussia into that alliance. Some preliminary work in the way of selection of the important documents had previously been performed by Mr. Oscar Browning and Mr. J. W. Headlam, but it is evident that the real labor of editing has rested wholly with Mr. Rose. The material presented, save in the texts of a few documents, is entirely new and extremely valuable for the light it throws on the relations of the four great powers in their attitude toward France. The only historian who has had access to these despatches is Mr. Rose himself, and even he has used them but briefly in his *Napoleon I* to show that the coalition was not the result of "Pitt's gold", but of Napoleon's own arrogant acts, really forcing Russia to take a step that she at first desired to avoid. It is interesting to note that in his *Napoleon I* Mr. Rose places the usual emphasis upon the influence exerted on the mind of Alexander I by the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, while in his preface to the present volume he calls attention to the lack of diplomatic interest in this incident and considers its international importance to have been overestimated by historians. This later judgment is certainly wholly borne out by the despatches themselves.

In a brief review it is impossible to do more than state the general impression received from the material presented, and to point out some few of the larger questions that threatened to prevent the successful issue of the negotiations. That general impression is that the Third Coalition was formed with much more difficulty than is customarily asserted; due partly to mutual jealousies and suspicions, partly to the Russian lack of confidence in Warren, the English diplomat at St. Petersburg in the earlier part of the negotiation, but principally to